

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-12 COME-00 MCT-01 SY-05 TRSE-00
OPR-02 A-01 HA-05 OMB-01 /098 W
-----021229 291226Z /15

P R 291155Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7615
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 03034

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, IR
SUBJ: SECOND BOMB THREAT AT COMMUNITY CHURCH, OTHER CIVIL
ATTACKS

REF: TEHRAN 2992

SUMMARY: ARMY CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE AT COMMUNITY CHURCH
RECEIVED SECOND BOMB THREAT BY SAME INDIVIDUAL MARCH 29, OTHER
SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY OCCURRED. NO BOMB FOUND, GUARDS TO BE
PLACED ON CHURCH. PRESS MARCH 29 REPORTS SEVERAL INCIDENTS
OF ATTACKS ON BANKS, OFTEN WITH BOTTLES FILLED WITH GASOLINE
OR OTHER INFLAMMABLE CHEMICALS. TWO CITY BUILDINGS, ONE BANK
ATTACKED IN ISFAHAN MARCH 29. ATTACKS APPEAR TO BE RANDOM
INCIDENTS BY LIKE-MINDED FANATICS. END SUMMARY.

1. ARMY CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE, WHICH RECEIVED FIRST BOMB THREAT
CALL REFTEL), GOT SECOND CALL ABOUT 1100 HOURS MARCH 29
WARNING THAT "YESTERDAY WAS KIDDING, TODAY IS THE REAL THING."
CALLER CONVINCED LISTENER THAT HE HAD WITNESSED EPISODE
REPORTED REFTEL AND SAID IRAN WOULD NOT BE GREAT UNTIL IT
GOT RID OF ALL CHRISTIANS, ESPECIALLY THE ARMY CHAPLAIN.
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WHEN TOLD THERE WERE CHILDREN IN AREA, CALLER REPLIED
"THEY DON'T COUNT; THEY'RE ONLY MILITARY CHILDREN." CALLER
DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A CONCERNED IRANIAN. SEARCH REVEALED
NO BOMB, BUT LATER IN AFTERNOON AT LEAST TWO SUSPICIOUS
CHARACTERS WERE SEEN IN VICINITY OF CHURCH. ONE WAS CHASED
THROUGH BACK CORNER OF LOT AND OBSERVED TO HAVE SMALL OBJECT,
PERHAPS PISTOL, IN HAND. ARMISH-MAAG CHIEF HAS ASKED FOR

MILITARY GUARD, AND TWO IRANIAN MILITARY ARE BEING STATIONED AT CHURCH FOR NEXT TWO WEEKS.

2. PARS NEWS AGENCY (PANA) REPORTED MORNING MARCH 29 THAT ON MARCH 27 AND 28 BANKS AND OTHER OFFICES WERE ATTACKED IN VARIOUS IRANIAN CITIES. MARCH 27, IN QAZVIN TWO SADERAT BANK BRANCHES WERE ATTACKED BY GROUPS WITH FIRE BOMBS WHO BROKE NUMEROUS WINDOWS. NO CASUALTIES BUT MODERATE DAMAGE. IN BABOL, ABOUT 50 MASKED INDIVIDUALS REPORTEDLY ATTACKED BAZARGANI AND SADERAT BANK BRANCH OFFICES AND KNOCKED RESURGENCE PARTY SIGN OFF PARTY'S OFFICE BUILDING BEFORE BEING DISPERSED BY THE POLICE. SIX WERE ARRESTED.

3. PANA ALSO REPORTED AN UNIDENTIFIED GROUP SMASHED A SADERAT BANK BRANCH WINDOW AND LEFT BEHIND A BOTTLE OF IN-FLAMMABLE CHEMICALS. IN KASHAN THREE UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS THREW A CAN OF GASOLINE AT THE BITA CINEMA HALL WHERE THE MAIN ENTRANCE CAUGHT FIRE BEFORE BEING QUICKLY PUT OUT.

4. CONSULATE ISFAHAN CONFIRMED RADIO REPORTS THAT TWO BRANCHES OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS WERE ATTACKED BY SOME GAS-FILLED BOTTLES WITH LITTLE DAMAGE AND NO CASUALTIES. A BANK SADERAT BRANCH WAS ALSO FIREBOMBED.

5. EMBASSY COMMENT: THROUGH MARCH 29, RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES HAVE CONTINUED TO URGE CALM AND NON-PROVOCATIVE STANCE
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ON THEIR FOLLOWERS. GENERAL BELIEF IS THAT ATTACKS NOTED ABOVE ARE WORK OF SMALL GROUPS OF PROBABLY FANATIC ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS "MARCHING TO A DIFFERENT DRUM" WHO ARE PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT RESPONSIVE TO STANDARD RELIGIOUS CONTROL BY LEADERS.
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